

TOWN OF COTTAGE GROVE
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
APRIL 19, 2022

D R A F T

- I. Town Chair Kris Hampton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Town Clerk Kim Banigan recorded the minutes, Treasurer Debra Abel and Town Attorney William Cole were also present. A list of other attendees is available in the Town Clerk's Office. There was a total of 31 Town Electors who signed in. Virtual attendance was possible using gotomeeting.com, although virtual attendees were not allowed to vote.
- II. Flag Pledge.
- III. The minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting were available in printed form. There was no reading of the minutes. **MOTION** by Kristi Williams/Mike DuPlayee to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2021 Annual Town Meeting as printed. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**
- IV. Additions to agenda by Electors: Richard Wood, 1965 W Ridge Rd, asked to talk about Town Government. Mike Anderson, 4582 Lotus Lane, asked to add the use of Town Roads by UTVs. Eugene Wagner, 1585 CTH BB, wanted to talk about the Town abandoning property at the intersection of Uphoff and Nora Road. Atty. Cole advised that would be the purview of the Town Board, not the electors.
- V. Presentation of the 2021 Annual Town Financial Report: Jeff Osvog of Johnson & Block Co, Inc. presented the [2021 Financial Highlights](#). He started with the balance sheet, which showed an unassigned fund balance of \$1,128,195. At 20% of the 2022 Budgeted Expenses, this is right in line with the Town's policy that calls for 20-25%, and shows that the Town has a good reserve in place for unexpected expenses or lost revenue. The income statement showed a net change in fund balance of -\$137,140, which he said reflected a planned use of reserves in 2021. General obligation debt at the end of 2021 was at \$627,028, which is only 2.38% of the Town's debt capacity. Graphs and pie charts were used to show trends for expenditures and revenues. Expenditures were fairly consistent over the past five years aside from a spike in capital outlay in 2019 when North Star Road was improved. Public works and public safety made up the largest portion of expenditures in 2021, followed by general government, capital outlay and debt service. Revenues were also fairly consistent over the past five years. Taxes made up 60% of the revenue in 2022, followed by intergovernmental revenue.
- VI. Dane County Sheriff's Office Update: Captain Jan Tetzlaff and Deputy Jacob Zilli represented the Dane County Sherriff's Office. A [Summary of 2022 calls](#) was available in handout form and shared by the Clerk on the screen and virtually. Capt. Tetzlaff said there were a total of 2975 calls in the Town in 2021, about 50% were handled by contract deputies and 50% by beat deputies. The highest percentage of calls were traffic related. Overall, crime is low in the Town, with three burglaries, 2 vehicle thefts, and several thefts from vehicles. Capt. Tetzlaff said these fall in line with trends around the County, and reminded citizens to lock their vehicles and doors, and close their garage doors when they are not in immediate site. There was also a crime scene processed in the Town related to a high-profile homicide that occurred elsewhere. Deputy Zilli introduced himself, and warned residents to beware of callers impersonating law enforcement, and to never fall for requests for money, gift cards, etc. He said that traffic is a big focus, and he is looking into getting a grant to purchase a speed board that could be moved around the Town. He addressed several questions and comments from citizens, including one about passing of farm machinery. The law recently changed on this, making it illegal to pass slow moving vehicles in a no-passing zone.

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- VII. Update on yard waste disposal options for Town residents: Hampton reported that in response to the County closing down their yard waste collection site, the Town implemented one in 2021. It is open seasonally, yard waste dropped off is hauled to Purple Cow Organics, LLC. This year it has been moved to a location just north of the Town garage. It is intended for Town residents only, and is under video surveillance. Allowable materials include grass clippings and leaves, but no brush or woody materials.
- VIII. Update on bridge replacement and repair plans: Hampton reported that the bridges on Uphoff Road and Femrite Drive are both scheduled for replacement this summer (beginning in June and running into September). Both roads will be closed while the bridges are out.
- IX. Update on Comprehensive Plan Update Process: The Plan Commission is finishing up the revision to the Comprehensive Plan that began in 2021, it is expected that a public hearing will be held in June, followed by adoption of the revised plan.
- X. Other Business:
- A. Eugene Wagner wondered about authorizing the Town Board to participate in watershed protection. He described increased water levels of the Koshkonong Creek on his farm at 1585 County Road BB. He cited a 2020 DNR assessment of the Koshkonong watershed, which he said found an 800% increase in flow volume and 16-18 inches of sludge coming from the Sun Prairie treatment plant. He expects that growth in Cottage Grove will contribute more to the problem. The DNR report recommended that the County and drainage boards work together to increase the flow rate, however he has discovered that there is no active drainage district in his area. He contacted County staff, who advised him that the County can't regulate how much water comes out of the Sun Prairie treatment plant, and told him his only option is to sue the City of Sun Prairie. Hampton said that the Towns of Cottage Grove and Deerfield, the City of Sun Prairie and the Friends of the Koshkohong Creek have partnered to engage the UniverCity Alliance to study the creek and make recommendations to improve flow. Dave Muehl is active with the Friends group, and provided more details about work the group has already done to clear debris from the creek. He said this is one of five steps that need to be taken, which also include 2) dredge the creek from Hwy 73 to Baxter Road, 3) the UniverCity Alliance study, 4) perform remedies as the study recommends, and 5) maintenance to make sure it doesn't happen again.
- B. ATVs/UTVs on Town Roads: Mike Anderson said this is the third year they are coming to the Annual meeting asking for ATV/UTV routes. The surrounding Towns of Sun Prairie and Deerfield, the Village of Cambridge, and Jefferson County are among many areas in the State that have implemented them. He brought Bill Blaska from the Quad County Runners to answer any questions. Blaska also provided a model ordinance. Discussion centered around safety, with Hampton asking questions about whether UTVs are intended for hard surfaces, what standard equipment they come with, and how fast they travel. Blaska said UTVs have a sticker that says Off Road Use Only because of a Federal government requirement, but safety is not an issue as evidenced by the number of roads that have been opened to UTVs in the State of Wisconsin. He said there were no UTV fatalities in the state on a public road in 2019-20 when riders wore seat belts. UTVs all have brake lights, headlights and seat belts. Some have turn signals. UTVs are capable of travelling 55 mph, and by law they must ride with all four wheels on the pavement. The year-around sport that includes 500,000 registered UTVs brings \$1.1 billion in revenue to the state. Mike Fonger asked if there are any off-road trails in the Town. There are none, but some felt that use of roads had to come first, to connect the trails.

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Tim Kluever, owner of Nora's Tavern, and Gary Stueber, owner of Doubledays, both spoke about the economic benefits to businesses. Dave Muehl said it should be considered more from a business and tourism aspect than as recreational. Stueber thought the Town might be reading more into it, he didn't think there would be large numbers of UTVs on Town Roads.

Kevin Shelley, 1764 US Hwy 12 & 18, spoke in opposition, mainly due to the noise. Blaska said UTVs are under 96 db by law.

Fonger noted that last year the Town Board turned UTV routes down 2-3, and suggested putting it back on the Town Board agenda for a new vote.

- XI. Town Government: Richard Wood commended the Town Board for being wonderful stewards of the Town and showing great fiscal responsibility. He was impressed to hear stories of neighbors working together tonight.
- XII. Set date for next year's Annual Town Meeting: **MOTION** by Mike DuPlayee/Kristi Williams to hold next year's meeting on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**
- XIII. Adjournment: **MOTION** by Mike DuPlayee/Richard Wood to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Kim Banigan, Clerk